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Note verbale dated 12 February 2013 from the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to inform him, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1166 (XII) of 26 November 1957, regarding the establishment of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and with the resolutions adopted subsequently by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the enlargement of the Executive Committee, that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan hereby wishes to apply for admission to the Executive Committee.

As a country that has one of the largest refugee populations worldwide, Afghanistan is well aware of the challenge of achieving the safe, orderly, gradual and voluntary return of refugees to their homeland. Together, in close partnership with the international community, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in particular, Afghanistan has achieved the return of approximately 6 million refugees to their homeland, marking one of the largest repatriation movements in modern history. Despite this milestone progress, close to 3 million Afghans still remain in exile in neighbouring countries.

On the basis of its decades-long struggle and experience in the effort to ensuring sustainable reintegration of refugees, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is of the firm conviction that, through its membership in the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, it will be able to play a unique and proactive role in the protection and promotion of the rights of refugees.

The Permanent Mission of Afghanistan would be grateful to obtain the favourable consideration of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in respect of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council with a view to enlarging the membership of the Executive Committee, as well as the proposal presented above.

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